

The **MONTEBELLO** Voice

an independent gazette

freedom

July 2, 2022



Staying younger

There is a lot of advertising for gym memberships, weight-loss programs, and miracle supplements that will make you stronger, leaner, and better looking. The trouble with these fast-acting measures is they are short-lived and don't work. What most people need is a more permanent life-style change. We need to take a holistic approach, reduce the stress in our lives, sleep better, plan healthy meals, and, yes, make fitness a priority and a routine.

I have just finished reading, *Vitality Important!*, a book by Dr. Mai-Lis Hellenius, Professor of Preventive Cardiology at Karolinska Institute. Dr. Hellenius talks about what collected and current research says concerning the impact of movement, of food, of stress, and life-style on our health. She shares many of her personal tips, including wonderful, healthy recipes from her kitchen. I enjoyed her section on Renaissance of the 1970s soup dinners. While there are many interesting areas that she discusses, I have picked one as an example of how physical activity effects the length of our telomeres that effects our biological age.

What are telomeres? At the very heart of our cells, in the cell nucleus, lies the key to all life. Our genes are here, packaged in DNA helices within our chromosomes. At the very ends of our chromosomes are areas called the telomeres. Studies done at the Karolinska Institute have proven that the shorter the telomeres, the older a person's biological age. Over the years, the length of the telomeres decreases. We should have telomeres that are as long as possible.

People who are physically active have longer telomeres than people who are inactive. Studies have shown that if we increase our physical activity, we can lengthen our telomeres. Just walking more each day (1,000 steps a day on average) both will increase the length of our telomeres and decrease our weight, make your waistline thinner, improve your lipoproteins and blood sugar. Dr. Hellenius stresses, "We must stop sitting still and increase daily movement." – Chester Taylor 📷

Filibuster

By Bruce R. Shaw

Some in D.C. want to try

Traditional ways to defy.

"End the filibuster."

They say with much bluster.

"That's not a good move," say I.

Why does that super vote be?

That's actually easy to see.

It forces debate

So too few won't dictate

Legislation not done carefully.

If just half the Senate plus one

Can get something easily done,

Then every election

Could lead to rejection

Of what previously was barely won.

Some Senators are quite annoying.

Democracy they are not employing:

"I won't compromise."

"I just want my prize."

Progress, it seems, they're destroying.

Those delays we must tolerate

To avoid a negative fate,

And be sure that the vote

Does truly connote

Compromise all can advocate.

So despite the ongoing frustration,

To have meaningful, well-thought legislation

The filibuster must be,

As I hope you do see,

And agree with this brief exhortation.

Cover photo Dian McDonald

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Glory to the Fourth

One year I was in Chile for their equivalent of the Fourth of July. Their national anthem was about how beautiful Chile is and how much they love it. Quite a surprise. Other national anthems are about nasty enemy nations and how we're going to sock it to them.

Along with a lot of bellicosity to amp up those who won't be around much longer. As in "*Dolce e decorum est pro patria mori*," found at Arlington National Cemetery. Or the Marseillaise: "Let's go countrymen, the day of glory has arrived." (If rotting in WWI trench warfare is your idea of glory). As for me, thanks to the draft I lost four years of my life to the Korean War. And almost my life as well. If my ship had rolled just two more degrees, it would have capsized and ship's company would have perished for certain.

The more war is glorified, the more war there will be. But have a great Fourth anyhow! – Richard Titus 📷

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Alexandria, Virginia

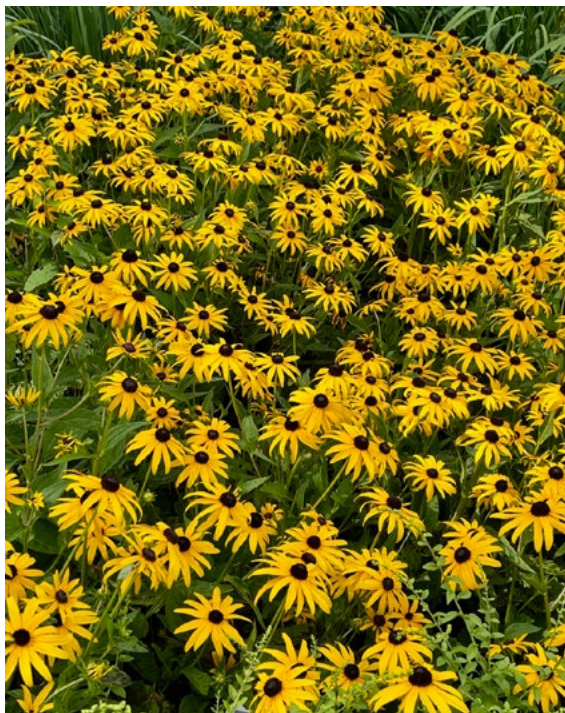
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Residents lead last push for pocket forest funding by July 8 deadline

By *Kathy Dismukes, Grounds Committee*

Since 2018, when the Grounds Committee launched the Montebello’s Arbor Day tree donation program, funding has been driven by residents. To date donations (combined with the support of management and the board), have enabled the planting of a whopping 342 native trees in the woodlands.

This year the Grounds Committee introduced the concept of a pocket forest as a new way to build on the successes of the Arbor Day program and jumpstart the restoration of our woodlands. Residents are once again in the driver’s seat when it comes to funding.

Our forest is a signature feature of the campus that increases property value and helps mitigate climate change, but the motivation to give to the Pocket Forest campaign comes from a deep place in residents’ hearts.

David and Catherine Claggett say, “We treasure Montebello’s woodlands as a peaceful, wonderful buffer to Alexandria’s urbanization. Any effort to nurture, grow, and preserve our forest is a worthwhile investment for all.”

Carolyn Strano says, “I gave a donation to the Pocket Forest project and so enjoy the convenience of being able to walk around the trail and connect with nature.”

Tom Ahern says he gave to the Pocket Forest project because “during the two years of Covid walking our forest trail was my primary source of sanity. I am delighted to help keep the forest going strong!”

Please join the Claggetts, Carolyn, Tom, and more than 80 other residents by donating one or more \$200 shares (or partial shares) by July 8 to make this innovative project possible. Donor forms are located in the mailroom slots. Questions? OurMontebelloGrounds@gmail.com. 📧



From left: Grounds Committee members *Brian Hayden, Rich Klimoski, donor Tom Ahern, and Grounds Committee member Chuck Amoroso* next to the future Pocket Forest plot on the trail near Building 5



James and Dolley Madison

President and First Lady of the United States

By Chester Taylor

The great-grandson of James and Martha Taylor, James Madison, was born in 1751. His parents were Colonel James Madison and Eleanor Rose Nellie Conway; his grandparents were Ambrose Madison and Frances Taylor Madison. Young James grew up in a large family, being the oldest of twelve other children. They lived on a large plantation in Orange County.

James was a small man, five feet four, weighing 100 pounds. He was very well educated. He first studied under Donald Robertson, a Scottish teacher, who taught several other plantation children at the Innes Plantation located in the Tidewater region of Virginia. The Reverend Thomas Martin also taught James in preparation for college. James didn't want to go to William & Mary like most young Virginians of his day, but enrolled at the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University.

James began his political career in 1776 serving in the Virginia state legislature. He became known as a protégé of the delegate, Thomas Jefferson. In 1780, James became the youngest delegate to the Continental Congress. He attended the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia where he was able to build coalitions and compromises and to lead the Convention to build a document that met the needs of the day and the test of time. In 1788, he wrote "The Federalist Papers" in collaboration with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay to support the ratification of the Constitution. Later he drafted

the first 10 amendments to the Constitution known as the Bill of Rights. He is known today as the Father of the Constitution.

When James was 43, he met a beautiful and charming young widow in Philadelphia by the name of Dolley Payne Todd, 25, and a Quaker. Earlier, in the late summer of 1793, a yellow fever epidemic broke out in Philadelphia. It killed 5,019 people in four months. Dolley lost her husband, a 3-month-old



son, William, and her husband's parents. By September that year, 20,000 people had fled the city. Her widowed mother, her other son, Todd, and she were on their own. It was a time to be practical. James was serving at the U.S. House of Representative (the capital met in Philadelphia from 1790-1800). In May of 1794, Aaron Burr introduced James to Dolley. A brisk courtship followed, and on September 15, 1794, they married. Almost immediately, the Quaker Church turned their back on her for marrying outside her faith and expelled her from the Society of Friends. James and Dolley lived three more years in Philadelphia and James adopted her son, Todd. It was a happy marriage.

When Thomas Jefferson was elected

president in 1801, he appointed James Madison as the Secretary of State. James supervised the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the United States. Jefferson, who was a widower, depended on Dolley to serve as a substitute First Lady for social events at the White House, which she relished. She was popular with everyone, being young, attractive, and social. She added fun to what otherwise would have been boring receptions and dinner parties.

In 1809, James Madison himself was elected President. By now, Dolley was well-prepared for her role as the First Lady. Things were going well for the new nation. It was prosperous. James was trying to limit the expansion of slavery and to ensure the United States honored its treaties with the Indians, keeping settlers off Indian reservations. He

wrestled with issues such as whether the United States needed a National Bank.

Then, incidents and interference by the British caused concern. Among these were trade restrictions imposed on United States goods to France, American merchant sailors impressed into the Royal Navy, and the British support of Indian tribes against American expansion to the West. This led first to an embargo against British goods and finally to war. There were naval battles in the Atlantic, and for a while it seemed the British were getting the upper hand. On August 24, 1814, the British invaded the city of Washington. Washington was an important political target, the locus of government, yet nonetheless lightly defended. The British wanted revenge for the American attack earlier

that year and its “wanton destruction of private property along the north shores of Lake Erie.” The British soldiers and marines marched from Bladensburg into Washington with little resistance and started burning down most public and military buildings in Washington.

President James Madison and the entire government fled the city. Madison, on horseback, first headed to Virginia, then turned north to go to Rockville, Maryland. He expected to meet up with American General John Winder and his forces. Luckily, for the nation, General Winder had his forces on the move towards Baltimore. Madison then rode east to nearby Brookeville, Maryland (20 miles north of Washington). He arrived there with some papers and a strong box. The strong box contained the entire belongings of the U.S. Treasury. He stayed with a Quaker family, Caleb and Henrietta Bentley.

Henrietta was a close friend with Dolley. As the British troops began marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, Dolley, with the help of her house slaves, rescued the Gilbert Stuart painting of George Washington, important documents, and silver. She tossed them into a carriage, escaped to Georgetown, and the next day slipped over the Potomac to Virginia. The British fleet moved up the Potomac to cut Washington off from Virginia. Its presence was enough to have the defenders at Fort Warburton, Maryland, flee without firing a shot. The fort sits on bluffs on the Potomac just across from Alexandria, Virginia. The British went after undefended Alexandria, a prosperous port. They spent several days looting hundreds of tons of merchandise from the port and city merchants, then turn next to Baltimore.

It was September 12, 1814. Madison was worried. He realized that while the United States Navy had a slight advantage on the Great Lakes, the British fleet was formidable on the Atlantic and Chesapeake. Madison and the other members of the government also recognized that Baltimore was going to be a close fight, a pivotal point in the war. They were apprehensive, but the forces at Baltimore were absolutely heroic, inflicting heavy casualties on the British, repulsing their sea and land forces, and killing the commander of



the British forces. Fort McHenry survived a hellacious bombardment from the Royal Navy. Francis Scott Key composed the poem “Defence of Fort McHenry,” which became the lyrics for the national anthem of the United States, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” It was a close fight, but in the end the British forces withdrew, and the Americans had hope. Then, at New Orleans, the British got their comeuppance.

This battle was fought from December 24, 1814, through January 8, 1815, until all the British forces had retreated. Even though the Treaty of Ghent to end the war was signed December 24, 1814, it was not ratified by the United States until February 1815. This final American victory removed all doubt in Britain. They had lost the war. Madison realized that intellect can only carry you so far and finally appreciated

the muscle of men like Jean Lafitte, Andrew Jackson, and the others who fought there like Lafitte’s pirates who fired the cannons so accurately and sank many of the British ships.

In 1817, the Madisons retired back to their home in Montpelier in Orange County, Virginia. Thomas Jefferson lived close by at Monticello. Their time in Washington had been expensive, and they were broke. Madison, in failing health, continued to write his thoughts,

but no one was really interested. A new government was in Washington. The plantation was in bad shape, too. There was more competition now, and the price of tobacco had fallen. Dolley’s son, Todd, who was managing the plantation, had become an alcoholic. They sold or leased most of their slaves to make ends meet. Madison

died in 1836 leaving Dolley destitute. Finally, Congress agreed to buy the rest of James Madison’s historical papers for \$25,000.

Dolley’s former slave, Paul Jennings, now freed with the help of Daniel Webster, wrote of her, “In the last days of her life, before Congress purchased her husband’s papers, she was in a state of absolute poverty, and I think sometimes suffered for the necessities of life. While I was a servant to Mr. Webster, he often sent me to her with a market-basket full of provisions and told me whenever I saw anything in the house that I thought she was in need of, to take it to her. I often did this, and occasionally gave her small sums from my own pocket...”

In 1849 at the age of 81 she died. James and Dolley Madison were buried at Montpelier. 🏠

A classic oasis in the slow lane

By Bob Shea

Whether we are, retired or still working, we find that we have a somewhat structured life. We have employment requirements, meetings, volunteer commitments, doctors' appointments, and other external influences that impose mental and time deadlines on our daily lives. It is simply a fact of life for most of us.

Recently I had the opportunity to attend a grandson's wedding at a classic old resort hotel in Kennebunkport, Maine, where suddenly I was in life's slow lane – and loved it after I became acclimated to few, if any, external deadlines. It did, however, take some getting used to.

We went to The Colony Hotel (<https://colonymaine.com>) two days before the wedding and stayed three days afterwards: the best of both worlds where we loved the special day in my grandson and his bride's life, but also had the ability to relax at a destination where for the most part the clock was irrelevant.

A family-owned hotel since 1947, it has existed since it opened on June 15, 1878 as the Ocean Bluff Hotel. Since then it has burned down, been rebuilt, renovated, and improved until it stands today on a bluff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean – a white three-storied wooden structure with a red roof and 120 guest rooms, a heated outdoor salt-water pool, a putting green, a private beach, a restaurant and bar, and a serenity that is almost difficult to get used to.

The Colony makes one ask a lot of questions:

What is preferred? An adirondack chair on the plush lawn enjoying a good book, the sun, and the salt air? Or a cushioned wicker chair on the veranda watching the waves? Or a wing-backed chair in the lobby in front of the huge real fireplace when it was chilly? Difficult decisions.

Is too much “lobsta, chowda,” or scallops decadent? Probably but well worth it. Don't even ask!

Is an afternoon nap a waste of time? No way!

How does a “news junkie” survive in a hotel room without a television? Withdrawal is difficult but worth the effort. A disclaimer: there is a TV in a lounge off the lobby and one in the bar. I noticed them but did not watch them.

Is it sinful to feel pampered by a professional staff who are committed to your comfort and enjoyment? Get used to it!



Is the “to die for” buffet breakfast in a glass-enclosed seaside veranda a diet breaker? Of course it is. Get used to it!

Were the two mallards seen in the swimming pool at dusk warming their feet or upset that the water was not the cold temperature of the ocean water? You'll have to ask the ducks.

In a way, the experience made me think of Downton Abbey with a sea breeze, the sounds of the ocean, but no courtesies or UK accents.

The hotel allows guests to bring dogs (for a daily fee), and while there, one meets a lot of well-behaved labs, poodles, and lap dogs. With dogs as members of families, it gives a new definition to a family resort. Many guests are there for their 10th or 15th visit.

Unlike many hotels where one stashes a suitcase and sleeps there while exploring the area, The Colony is a destination in and of itself. Except for a trip to Dock Square in downtown Kennebunkport for the mandatory shopping

trip, or a short drive around the coastal corner to see Walker Point, the storied Bush family compound, there is little incentive to leave the hotel.

A discussion with the resident general revealed his staffing philosophy – and it works. He needed about 16 people to staff the front desk 24/7. However, he hired 30 middle-aged locals who want to work only half a year. The Colony is closed from mid-October to mid-May. He allowed them to coordinate their own schedules with each working the hours that fit their lifestyle as long as the front desk was fully staffed. These older folks, all with past professional lives in business and commerce, provide a knowledgeable, competent, and gracious staff. And, as he said, they show up early, finish any tasks regardless of shift endings, and do not spend the day texting best friends. Sounds like an enlightened human resource policy, especially since they are the first and last people one encounters at The Colony.

Many of the mostly international wait and housekeeping staff are service industry professionals who work at another family-owned hotel in Florida during the winter and migrate to Maine for the summer. The hotel provides on-site accommodations for them as they otherwise could not afford to live in pricey Kennebunkport. A better approach than hiring college kids who bunk in the town, are seeking a fun summer at the beach, and see any job as a distraction from their main goal.

Life in the slow lane can be addictive. We reluctantly left the day after Memorial Day to contend with the I-95 South traffic and road crazies. However, we did get a glimpse of what life can be when it is 100% unstructured and clock-free.

We thank our grandson and his lovely bride for selecting The Colony to host their wedding. It was a very special experience for all of us. Yes, life in the slow lane is better than any possible therapy. 🍷

Board discusses dog park, Capital Improvement Fund, AiM, and administrative resolutions

By *Mikhailina Karina*

The meeting's most momentous news was announced right before board president lowered the gavel a few minutes before 9 p.m.: the long-awaited opening of the remodeled Community Center would take place in the next two weeks – provided all approvals and inspections are passed without any hitches. President Jon Kandel projects the furniture to start moving in on July 11 or 12, and the restaurant, fitness center, and locker rooms to be open at that time.

The June 28 work session had a short agenda with four items, all of which were “moved ahead.” No votes were taken at this meeting.

Dog run

After years of proposals, discussions, and surveys, the dog park may finally become a reality. None of the board members said anything opposing the project, but several directors asked about a dozen questions about potential noise, odor, expenses, staff time, vegetation, time limits, and county rules. Lauren Pierce and Chuck Amorosino, co-chairs of the Dog Run Working Group that drew leadership from the Pet Club and the Grounds Committee, answered each question. They presented the board with a detailed 13-page proposal <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-EUaRzPh6mnlL7Z9UGSS-WfHwgnOxRUK/view> that describes everything from ground surface, budget, rules, and amenities.

In her presentation, Pierce said more than 100 dogs reside at Montebello. Having a designated space for dogs to be off leash keeps Montebello competitive with other communities that offer such amenity, as well as improves Montebello's attractiveness to potential buyers.

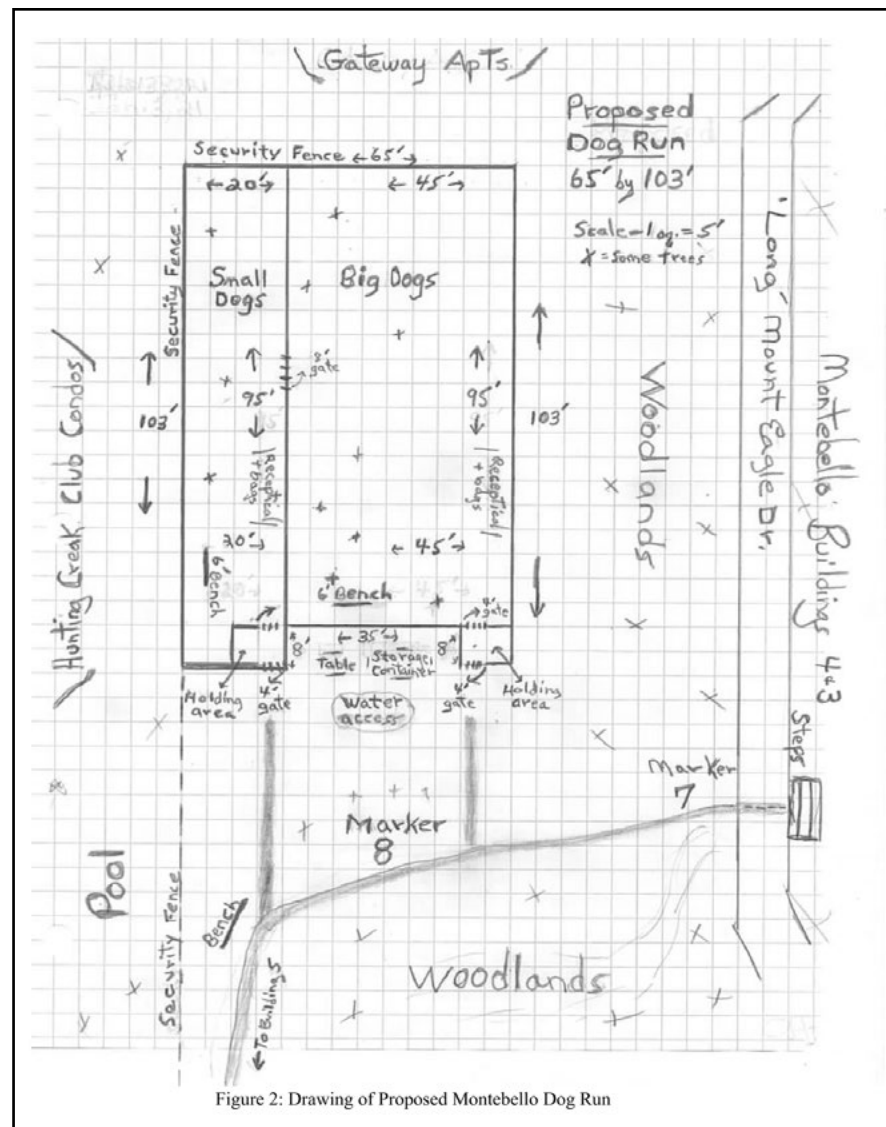
The start-up budget for the project will be close to \$52,000, which will in-

clude almost \$24,000 for landscaping, close to \$17,000 for materials, nearly \$9,000 for trash, \$100 for dog bags for waste, and \$2,400 for staffing time allocation. The amenity would be funded by the Capital Improvement Fund.

“We're limited to 1 percent per year for capital improvements,” commented Director Jack Quick. President Kandel responded, “The only thing on the books right now is the EV charger.” He said funding the dog park “wouldn't be a problem,” since other big-ticket items – the Community Center, the trails, and the fire alarm system upgrades are nearly completed.

Pierce and Amorosino gave the following responses to concerns raised by board members:

- The dog run meets all county requirements because Montebello is considered “private property with own backyard.”
- Running water for cleaning will be piped in from building 5, not a newly constructed water tank.
- Cameras, similar to the existing deer cameras, will be installed to monitor the space.
- Housekeeping staff who currently take care of outdoor amenities will take care of this space for 15 minutes three times a week.





Capital improvements

According to a memo from board treasurer Rolf Dietrich, “last year Montebello implemented a Capital Improvement Fund so that we can properly address the funding of our capital improvements.” The draft of the proposal is ready to go forth to Finance and Budget for their review, comments, and recommendations. The draft copy of the proposed resolution is on page 19 of the board packet.

Altering Montebello’s procedure for creating resolutions

Director Click said she wrote the memo (page 25 in the board packet) as a starting point to streamline some administrative

processes. To her knowledge, Montebello is “the only association with a cumbersome process to draft resolutions.” Board minutes are an official document and proof of votes, she said. Her goal is to “define a process that is less work for staff and secretary, wastes less paper and staff time, and still maintains adequate legal” requirements.

“It’s a very good idea,” Director Dietrich said. “I like everything Heather [Director Click] talked about.” He also asked about the possibility of indexing resolutions for easier retrieval.

Art in Montebello Terms of Reference

Page 28 of the board packet shows amendments to the 2014 bylaws governing Montebello’s art committee. “We are expanding the concept of art to multiple arts,” said Director Click. Also, some membership and voting requirements are eliminated. Director Bruce Shaw, board liaison to AiM, put it simply, “One difficulty is that many artists are not meeting-oriented.”

A new paragraph added to the group’s purpose broadens its scope to attract a wider membership: “Sponsor workshops, lecture series, and other art media, including but not limited to

photography, films, sculptures, polymer clay, textiles, stained glass, woodworking, and jewelry.”

Rescinding administrative resolutions

In its ongoing work to review Montebello’s administrative resolutions, Quality Improvement Committee, with input from General Manager Eric Finke, recommended to rescind resolutions not related to residents and handled administratively.

“These three resolutions were reviewed by management at the request of QI. They fall in the category of employee policies and do have not direct impact on owners and residents. They represent personnel policies and need not be codified as administrative resolutions,” Director Click wrote in the memo. “These resolutions recommended for rescinding are representative of a number of administrative resolutions that clutter Montebello’s administrative policies unnecessarily. One goal of the review is to create a manageable body of administrative resolutions that provides effective guidance to the Association without being unnecessarily cumbersome.”

AR#89 Amended, Insurance Deductible (see June 9 MML).

AR#59, Personnel Policy Manual Revision “for salary exempt employees... [that] increases maximum accrual vacation policy to 240 hours per year.”

AR#92 Employee Health Benefit Eligibility “new Montebello employees will have a 60-day waiting period before being eligible” for common employee benefits.

AR#108 Sustained Service Award that awards employees \$500 for 15 years of service, \$750 for 20 years, and \$1,000 for 25 years.

Board president Kandel said he plans to have the July 26 meeting in the new space, with proceedings also available via Zoom. 📺

- Urine odor will be controlled by the proper foundation.

- Large and small dogs will be in separate areas.

- All dogs have current vaccinations.
- No trees will be lost, but stumps and some vegetation will have to come out.
- Success will be defined by the frequent use of the dog park and the opportunities for the dogs to run free and socialize.

- Although the neighboring condo has not yet been contacted, the dog park will abut a brick wall and a parking lot on their side of the fence.

Two residents had concerns about the potential for “parasitic infections spread by the accumulation of dogs” and financial impact on buildings 3 and 4 transition areas. Regarding the latter, President Kandel responded that the transition areas work has been pushed back because of the need to resolve drainage issues.

“I am very excited about this possibility for Montebello,” said Director Heather Click. “It’s a value-added item for the long-run.”



By Isabel Tiftt (Jeanne's daughter)

June 25 at 2:13 p.m. via Facebook

I'm not commenting on the SCOTUS's revisiting Roe v. Wade.

I'm not commenting because it's a failure of consideration that defies language.

I'm not commenting because it's a failure of reason that beggars the power of words.

I'm not commenting because it's a blitheration that only barely-verbal toddlers in grownup bodies could contemplate.

I'm not commenting because abortion is usually a tragedy, but there are so many things that are ultimately more damaging.

I'm not commenting because I have friends who had the scars, abuse, and rape involved in back alley abortions, and the friends' sisters who didn't survive them.

I'm not commenting, not because this isn't worthy of discussion, but because we've had those discussions ad nauseam, and the world we'll be bringing the babies who result from so much going so wrong, is worse still than the ones their fathers had, that their mothers may or may not survive.

I'm not commenting, because there are no words.